

**For Immediate Release**

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**HERSETH SANDLIN STATEMENT ON DEFENSE SECRETARY'S SUPPORT OF  
NEXT-GENERATION BOMBER**

**Washington, DC {September 17, 2009}-** Today, Rep. Herseth Sandlin issued the following statement in response to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates indicating his support for development of a next-generation bomber in a speech to the U.S. Air Force Association:

"I am pleased that Defense Secretary Gates is stating support for the next-generation bomber as a national priority that is needed to ensure our nation has the ability to carry out long-range missions. I have made the case for the next-generation bomber to officials including the Air Force Chief of Staff, General Norton Schwartz, and I look forward to continuing to work with the Administration and my colleagues in Congress to advance this program. As a potential home for the next-generation bomber and current home of the B-1 bomber, Ellsworth Air Force Base will continue to play a key role in our nation's future strategic defense needs."

In the past, Secretary Gates raised a number of questions about the next-generation bomber, including whether we had enough information to assess its need, and whether a new bomber could be unmanned.

However, this week Reuters reported that Secretary Gates "threw his support" behind a new long-range bomber during a speech to the annual conference of the U.S. Air Force Association. ("Gates endorses new U.S. bomber project," Reuters, 9/16/09)

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